

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding final non-Office Action mailed June 12, 2006. Upon entry of the amendments in this response, claims 1 – 9 and 25 pending. In particular, Applicants have amended claim 1, and have canceled claims 10 – 24 without prejudice, waiver, or disclaimer. Applicants have canceled claims 10 – 24 merely to reduce the number of disputed issues and to facilitate early allowance and issuance of other claims in the present application. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of these canceled claims in a continuing application, if Applicants so choose, and do not intend to dedicate the canceled subject matter to the public. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and presently pending claims are respectfully requested.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action indicates that the pending claims would define over the prior art, and therefore be allowable, if Applicants were to amend the claims or otherwise overcome the rejections articulated under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph. As set forth above, Applicants have amended claim 1 and respectfully assert that, for at least the reasons indicated below, the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

In the Specification

The Office Action indicates that the specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. Applicants respectfully traverse. In this regard, support for the contested features is found in the application as originally filed. Specifically, the contested language of “a first predetermined distance” and “a second

predetermined distance” can be found in original claim 14, which constitutes a portion of the specification. However, in order to expedite examination, Applicants have amended claim 1 as set forth above, thereby accommodating the rejection. Applicants respectfully request, therefore, that the rejection be removed.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph

The Office Action indicates that claims 1 – 9 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. In particular, the Office Action indicates that there is no support for the portion of claim 1, which recites “removing the sacrificial conductive material such that the sacrificial material no longer maintains separation between the layers of ferromagnetic material of the first stack.” Applicants respectfully traverse.

In this regard, there appears to be a misunderstanding with respect to the limitations recited in claim 1. Specifically, the Office Action is correct in that the Applicants have described some embodiments in which separation between the layers of ferromagnetic material of the first stack is maintained. However, the contested recitation in claim 1 of “removing the sacrificial conductive material such that the sacrificial material no longer maintains separation between the layers of ferromagnetic material of the first stack” is accurate. That is, in accordance with the embodiment of claim 1, the sacrificial conductive material is removed, and thus, no longer maintains separation between the layers of ferromagnetic material of the first stack. Notably, claim 1 further recites that the support structure maintains the separation.

In particular, claim 1 additionally recites:

. . . the first stack and the second stack of ferromagnetic layers being mechanically supported by the support structure such that **the support structure maintains separation between the layers of ferromagnetic material of the first stack and between the layers of ferromagnetic material of the second stack.**

(Emphasis added).

Thus, claim 1 does not recite that the layers are not separated as contended in the Office Action.

To the contrary, separation is clearly recited as being maintained by the support structure after the sacrificial conductive material has been removed. Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be removed and that the pending claims be placed in condition for allowance.

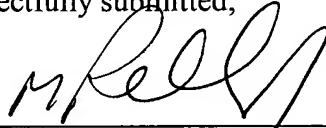
Cited Art Made of Record

The cited art made of record has been considered, but is not believed to affect the patentability of the presently pending claims.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing amendments and for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that all objections and/or rejections have been traversed, rendered moot, and/or accommodated, and that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on 7/11/06.



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